

the last hours of intense pain when in a personal prayer he said: « The chalice is passed, your will is done, Father ».

Mike BRADLEY, O.M.I.

## **BISHOP PIERRE FALLAIZE**

(1887-1964)

On August 10, 1964, passed away at Fort Smith, Bishop Pierre Fallaize, one of the pioneers of missionary work among the Eskimo of the Mackenzie.

He was born in Conneville-sur-Ifonfleur, May 25, 1887, and lost his parents while he was still very young: he could barely remember his father and his mother died when he was only ten years old.

In October 1899, he entered the Little Seminary at Lisieux where he studied for six years. This period of his life must have marked him deeply for, later, when he had to abandon the missions of the Canadian North, it was in Lisieux that he chose to continue to serve God and to minister to souls.

Undoubtedly his great devotion to St. Theresa of Lisieux was born there; to his brother who was suffering from a cancer of the arm, he recommended a pilgrimage to Lisieux and devotion to St. Theresa... His brother took the advice and lived another 44 years.

On December 8, 1906, he entered the Oblate Noviciate of Bestin in Belgium; he completed his theological studies in Liège. He was ordained on July 7, 1912, and the following year was assigned to the Vicariate Apostolic of the Mackenzie.

He began the rugged apprenticeship of the missionary of that era in Edmonton. The boats having already left, he was to spend the winter at Lac la Biche; but, in September, he had a chance to board

a boat which got him as far as Fort Chipewyan but not without great difficulty, because of the ice. In December, he was given the opportunity of loading his few personal belongings on a sled leaving for Fort Smith; the next 100 miles to Fort Smith were covered on foot in deep snow without the benefit of snowshoes. A few days later, he set out on another 200-mile journey to Fort Resolution where he joined his superior, Bishop Breynat, and the community which was to be his. He spent almost seven years there, familiarizing himself with the Montagnais language and visiting the camps. Back at Smith during his last years, he remembered the language well enough to carry on brief conversations with the natives of the area. Many still remember with a smile in Resolution the day when the dogs, sensing the lack of control of their novice driver, took advantage of it to bolt in perfect unison through the open door of a nearby house, much to the surprise of the occupants and to the embarrassment of the young priest.

In 1920, Father Fallaize was advised with Brother Meyer to join Father Frapsauce at Great Bear Lake where the latter was trying to establish a lasting contact with the Eskimo. From Fort Norman on, the journey was very difficult: the water level was low and the barge of the trader with whom they were travelling was heavily loaded; every rapid meant a portage. It took almost two months to travel the 90 miles to Fort Franklin. They crossed Great Bear Lake only to find Fr. Frapsauce's hut empty. Their disappointment turned to consternation when they realized that Father Frapsauce had fallen through the thin autumn ice of the lake along with his sled and dogs. Until 1926, Fr. Fallaize spent most of his time with the Indians and Eskimos of the area, remaining there at times for over a year, completely cut off from the outside world.

In 1928, accompanied by Father Binamé and Brother Becksheffer, he left for Herschel Island, on the Arctic Coast, aboard a makeshift boat on which they had piled the necessary building materials for the construction of a Mission on the Coppermine. A severe storm placed them in a precarious position and, on August 15th, they were forced ashore at Letty Harbour. They decided to build a mission dedicated to our Lady of Lourdes. The Blessed Virgin, patron of the Oblates, surely had had a hand in arranging all this, for it was at this very Mission, later moved to Paulatuk, and more recently to Cape Parry, that all the Eskimos in the locality embraced the Catholic faith.

The following year, Bishop Breynat stopped by to pick him up, along with Bro. Berens, to go and found a Mission at Coppermine. It was there, in 1931, that he unexpectedly received a wire from Rome, advising him of his nomination as Coadjutor to the Vicar Apostolic of the Mackenzie. His consecration took place on September 13th, 1931, at Fort Resolution. He spent the next 8 years visiting the missions throughout that immense Vicariate, bringing very special attention to the foundation and development of Eskimo Missions.

However, in 1939, forced to resign due to his rapidly dwindling eyesight, he retired in Lisieux, near the Shrine of the Little Flower. It was indeed but a relative retirement, for during 20 years, he continued to "serve" faithfully as a confessor to the many pilgrims, when he was not replacing bishops on Confirmation tours.

In 1961, Bishop Piché persuaded him to return to the Mackenzie and personally brought him back to Fort Smith. His happiness was evident as he found himself once more amid the very special atmosphere of the North, and renewed old acquaintances with the Fathers, Brothers and Sisters.

Although not completely blind, he could not distinguish features; every morning, he celebrated the Mass of the Blessed Virgin, and each day, accompanied by his dog, he went for a short walk. Although rather violent by nature, he was always of a smiling, even disposition, accepting good-naturedly the consequences of his blindness, to such an extent that others almost forgot it could cause him grief. Above all, he did not wish to inconvenience anyone and tried to cause as little trouble as possible to those around him.

God Himself seemed to respect his wishes for He came silently, during the night of August 9th to August 10th, 1964, to get his faithful servant.

He continues to "serve", for he leaves to those who carry on his work, the example of the Missionary of the Arctic, that is one of contrasts: ardent and pious, zealous yet patient, enterprising yet humble, driven by a sincere love for his Indians and his Eskimos; and the secret of this equilibrium is found in a life that is deeply anchored in God.

R. H.

### **FATHER M.F. BIZIEN**

(1878-1964)

Among the Fernch Oblate missionaries who have laboured in Ceylon with all the courage, tenacity and purpose, the spirit of order and discipline and above all with a great spiritual zeal, Fr. Francis M. BIZIEN was one. He was indeed a great churchman who spent himself for the interests of the Church in Ceylon.

Ordained a priest in 1903, he was sent the following year to the diocese of Jaffna where he mini-